

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication system comprising:

a plurality of communication terminals;

a distribution system for selectively delivering communication information between and among any of said terminals;

5 at least one home system associated with a subset of said terminals, said home system including a distribution system for selectively accessing a plurality of applications;

at least some of said terminals including a communication information rerouting system for redirecting at least a portion of any communication information which had been originally directed to said terminal to a home system associated with said terminal; and

10 a system operative under control of a home system to which communication information has been redirected for accessing one or more of said applications and for providing information from accessed ones of said applications to said originally directed terminal.

2. The invention of claim 1 wherein at least one of said communication terminals is physically remote from said home system.

3. The invention of claim 1 wherein at least one of said communication terminals is a wireless terminal.

4. The invention of claim 1 wherein said communication information rerouting system is responsive to origination identification data contained in said communication information.

5. The invention of claim 4 wherein said origination identification data comprises Automatic Number Identification (ANI) signals.

6. The invention of claim 4 wherein said origination identification data comprises Mobile Identification Number (MIN) signals.

7. The invention of claim 4 wherein said origination identification data comprises an e-mail address.

8. The invention of claim 1 wherein at least some of said plurality of applications are connected to access external information resources.

9. The invention of claim 8 wherein one of said external information resources is the Internet.

10. The invention of claim 8 wherein one of said external information resources is an interactive response unit (IRU).

11. The invention of claim 8 wherein one of said external information resources is an electronic database.

12. A communication system comprising;

a plurality of communication terminals;

a distribution system for selectively delivering communication information between and among any of said terminals;

5 at least one home system associated with a subset of said terminals, said home system including a distribution system for selectively accessing a plurality of applications;

at least one of said terminals including means for accessing an associated home system so as to obtain from one or more of said home system applications data necessary for the completion of a communication connection directed either to or from said terminal.

13. The invention of claim 12 wherein said at least one terminal is physically remote from said home system.

14. The invention of claim 12 wherein said at least one terminal is a wireless terminal.

15. A multi-platform, multimedia information and communication system connected to a communications network comprising:

a plurality of user terminals;

5 a distribution system for selectively delivering communication information to or from any of said terminals;

at least one server associated with at least a subset of said terminals, said at least one server having a plurality of applications selectively accessible by said terminals and said at least one server;

a plurality of internal data resources;

10 at least some of said terminals including an information routing system for redirecting at least a portion of said communication information to a server associated with said terminal; and

15 application processing means responsive to said at least one server for accessing one or more of said applications and providing said applications information redirected from said terminal.

16. The communication system of claim 15 wherein said at least one server further comprises a plurality of external data resources.

17. The communication system of claim 15 wherein said user terminals are chosen from the group consisting of:

a conventional telephone;

a conventional telephone equipped with a visual display;

5 a wireless telephone;

a paging device equipped with a visual display;

a hand-held computing device (PDA);
a personal computer (PC); and
a network computer.

18. The communication system of claim 15 wherein said information routing system redirects said communication information to said server associated with said terminal based on Automatic Number Identification (ANI) signals received by said user terminal during a telephone call.

19. The communication system of claim 15 wherein said information routing system redirects said communication information to said server associated with said terminal based on Mobile Identification Number(MIN) signals received by said user terminal during a wireless telephone call.

20. The communication system of claim 16 wherein one of said plurality of external data resources is the Internet.

21. The communication system of claim 16 wherein one of said plurality of external data resources is a web-enabled database server.

22. The communication system of claim 15 wherein said at least one server further comprises an interactive response unit (IRU) for providing voice, data, or multimedia messages to said user terminals.

23. The communication system of claim 15 further including a function responsive to said server for sending communication information processed or obtained by one or more of said applications to one of said communication terminals.

24. A method for providing multimedia data services comprising the steps of:
associating at least one server with a plurality of user terminals over a communication network;

receiving communication information from at least one of said user terminals;

5 accessing one or more of a plurality of applications responsive to said communication information; and

sending communication information processed or obtained by said one or more of said plurality of applications to said at least one of said user terminals.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein said at least one server provides messaging services related to at least some of said plurality of user terminals.

26. The method of claim 25 further including the steps of:

automatically sending notification signals to said at least some of said user terminals when said at least one server receives a message relating to said at least some of said user terminals; and

5 sending said message to related said user terminal responsive to a request sent by said terminal.

27. The method of claim 25 further including the steps of:

automatically accessing one or more of said plurality of applications based on sender identification data contained in said message; and

5 sending communication data processed or obtained by said one or more of said applications to said at least some of said user terminals with said message.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein said sender identification data includes Automatic Number Identification (ANI) signals.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein said sender identification data includes Mobile Identification Number (MIN) signals.

30. The method of claim 27 wherein said sender identification data includes an e-mail address.

31. The method of claim 27 wherein said at least one server determines which one or more of said plurality of applications to run by accessing a user memory.

32. A communication system comprising:

a plurality of applications, some of which are local to the communication system and some of which may be remote therefrom;

at least one terminal having audio capability for communicating with a plurality of other terminals under control of said communication system; said terminal having data capability for concurrently communicating with at least one of said applications; and wherein

said communication system controls the access to and from all of said applications in response to commands exchanged with said terminal.

33. The system of claim 32 wherein said terminal is a telephone having audio capability and a screen for displaying data communicated thereto from a selected one of said applications.

34. The system of claim 32 wherein said terminal includes a system which selectively reroutes all or a portion of any data signals received by said terminal to said communication system.

35. The system of claim 34 wherein said data signals comprise Automatic Number Identification (ANI) signals.

36. The system of claim 34 wherein said data signals comprise Mobile Identification Number (MIN) signal.

37. The system of claim 34 wherein said data signals comprise all signals comprising a telephone call.

38. The system of claim 34 further including a function responsive to said rerouted data signals for accessing one or more of said plurality of applications; said function capable of supplying said rerouted data signals to said one or more of said plurality of applications and capable of sending any data or information resultant from said accessing one
5 or more of said plurality of applications to said terminal.

39. A communication system comprising:

a local system remote from the public system for handling telecommunications to and from a plurality of communication devices;

a plurality of applications available to said devices, said availability being controlled by said local system;

means for allowing any such devices to selectively access any of said applications during a communication connection directed to or from said devices; and

means for extending the operation of said last-mentioned means to a select set of communication terminals remote from said local system.

40. The system of claim 39 wherein at least one of said select set of remote communication terminals is a wireless phone.

41. The system of claim 40 wherein said wireless phone connects to said local system using the public system.

42. The system of claim 34 wherein at least some of said communication devices receives packet data.

42. The system of claim 39 wherein at least some of said communication devices receives both packet data and continuous data.